

REMARKS

The following remarks are provided in response to the Final Office Action dated December 12, 2007. Claims 1-11 are currently pending in the above-identified patent application. In the December 12th Office Action, claims 1-7 and 9-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Published Application No. US 20030153372 A1) (hereinafter "Shimamura") in view of Published Application No. US 20040198433 A1 to Lee (hereinafter "Lee") and further in view of US Patent No. 6,466,202 to Suso et al. (hereinafter "Suso").

Claims 1 and 7 are the only pending independent claims. Claim 1 is directed to a mobile terminal device with a camera that comprises: two casings which are overlapped on each other; connecting section for connecting said two casings so that said two casings rotate around an axial line in parallel with a direction in which said two casings are overlapped; and a camera module having a lens and an image-taking element so as to form an optical axis passing through said lens and said image-taking element, said camera module being disposed inside of said connecting section with said optical axis of said camera module substantially coincident with said axial line, said axial line and said optical axis being disposed in a thickness direction of said mobile terminal device. The second independent claim, claim 7, is directed to a mobile terminal device with a camera that comprises: two casings which can be overlapped on each other; a connecting section for connecting said two casings so that said two casings rotate around an axial line in parallel with a direction in which said two casings are overlapped, wherein said connecting section has a fixed base member which is fixed on one of said two casings and a movable base member which is fixed on the other of said two casings and is fit in the peripheral surface of said fixed base member rotatably around said axial line; a hollow space provided in

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said fixed base member; and a camera module having a lens and an image-taking element so as to form an optical axis passing through said lens and said image-taking element, said camera module being disposed inside of said hollow space, with said optical axis substantially coincident with said axial line, said axial line and said optical axis being disposed in a thickness direction of said mobile terminal device. Both claims 1 and 7 have in common an axial line in parallel with a direction in which the two casings of the mobile terminal are overlapped, an optical axis wherein the optical axis is coincident with the axial line and wherein the axial line and the optical axis are disposed in a thickness direction of the mobile terminal device. As explained below, the combination of those claimed features are not disclosed in any of Shimamura, Lee and Suso and therefore those references when combined do not render claims 1 and 7 obvious. Because claims 1 and 7 are not rendered obvious none of the claims dependent on those claims are rendered obvious.

The Examiner correctly recognizes that the combination of Shimamura and Lee fails specifically to teach said axial line and said optical axis "being disposed in the thickness direction" of said mobile terminal device (see Office Action, page 3, last paragraph). In order to remedy the inadequacy of the combination Shimamura and Lee in rendering the claims obvious, the Examiner further relies on Suso. The Examiner states that "Suso discloses said axial line and said optical axis "being disposed in the thickness direction" of said mobile terminal device (see Office Action, page 4, first paragraph). However, Suso does not disclose that the axial line (around which two casings rotate) is disposed in a thickness direction of the mobile terminal device.

More specifically, Suso discloses, in Figs. 1a to 1d, a terminal device having a rotary shaft 7 provided to an outer casing 1 and a rotary support part 6 provided to an outer casing 2, constituting a hinge structure. The outer casings 1 and 2 can be opened and closed as indicated by the arrow C in Fig. 1d. The rotary shaft support part 6 is rotatably attached on the side remote from the rotary shaft 7, with an accommodation member 8 in which a thin video camera and so on are accommodated. The accommodation member 8 is formed in a part thereof with a hole in which the camera lens 9 is fitted (see column 4, lines 17 to 31). The rotary shaft 7 is fitted thereon with the accommodation member 8 which is therefore rotatable around the center axis (an axial line) D of the rotary shaft 7. When the accommodation member 8 is rotated relative to the rotary shaft 7, the direction of the video camera accommodated in the accommodation member 8, that is the direction of the camera lens 9 can be changed over an angle of 360 deg, around the center axis (the axial line) D of the rotary shaft 7 (see column 6, lines 12 to 20).

Thus, in Suso, the axial line D of the rotary shaft 7 around which the two casings rotate is disposed orthogonal to the thickness direction of the terminal device, but not disposed in the thickness direction of the terminal device, contrary to the Examiner's characterization of Suso on the Office Action. Therefore, none of Shimamura, Lee, and Suso discloses or teaches the structural feature that "said axial line and said optical axis being disposed in a thickness direction of said mobile terminal device."

Further, the Examiner may incorrectly consider that the combination of Shimamura and Lee teaches the other structural feature of the present invention, i.e., "said optical axis of said camera module substantially coincident with said axial line.. This structural feature however, is neither taught nor suggested by Shimamura, Lee, Suso or any combination

thereof.

More specifically, in Shimamura, an optical axis of the camera module 121 (FIG. 3C) is not coincident with an axial line around which two casings rotate. In Lee, an optical axis of the camera module 130 (FIG. 1) or 300 (FIG. 2) is orthogonal to a hinge axis (an axial line) H1 around which two casings rotate because a lens 359 (see FIG. 3) is provided on a side wall of the cylindrical camera module 130 or 300. The optical axis of the camera module passing through the lens 359 is, therefore, not coincident with the axial line H1. In Suso, the camera lens 9 is provided on side wall of the accommodation member 8 whose shape is cylindrical, similar to the structure of Lee. An optical axis passing through the lens 9 of the video camera is, therefore, orthogonal to the axial line D of the rotary shaft 7. The optical axis of the camera module in Suso is never coincident with the axial line D.

Even if the teaching of Lee and Suso can be combined with Shimamura, that is, the cylindrical camera module provided with a lens on a side wall thereof, as taught by Lee and Suso, as applied to Shimamura's cylindrical connecting section (cylindrical hinge), the optical axis of the cylindrical camera module is still orthogonal to the axial line of Shimamura's cylindrical connecting section. Therefore, reasonable combination of Shimamura, Lee, and Suso results in that the optical axis of the camera module is not coincident with the axial line, and the optical axis is not disposed in a thickness direction of the mobile terminal.

As discussed above, the feature of the present invention, among others, "said optical axis of said camera module substantially coincident with said axial line, said axial line and said optical axis being disposed in a thickness direction of said "mobile terminal device" is neither taught nor suggested by Shimamura, Lee, Suso, or the combination thereof.

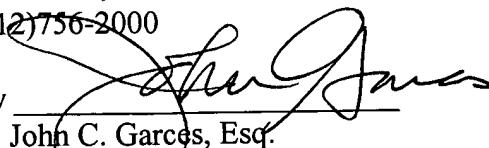
Because of the structural features of the claimed invention, advantageously it is possible to obtain a sufficient length for the optical axis for the camera module without causing an increase in the thickness of the casings. Further, it is possible to save a space inside the casings because it is not necessary to have a particular space for disposing the camera module in the casings, as described in Applicants' specification.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that all pending claims are allowable over the cited prior art and are in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and prompt allowance of this application are respectfully requested. The Examiner is urged to telephone Applicants' undersigned counsel at the number noted below if it will advance the prosecution of this application, or with any suggestion to resolve any condition that would impede allowance. In the event that any extension of time is required, Applicants petition for that extension of time required to make this response timely. Kindly charge any additional fee, or credit any surplus, to Deposit Account No. 50-0675, Order No. 848075/0073. In the event that an extension of time is needed for entry of this Response that is not otherwise provided for, such extension of time is hereby respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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